

**Joint Press Release**

**Offices of the Mayors of the Cities of La Salle, Peru, Utica, Oglesby and Spring Valley**

**Sunday, March 14, 2020**

**For Immediate Release**

**Amid intensifying nationwide concern of the spread of COVID-19, commonly referred to as Coronavirus, the aforementioned mayors will each be holding special city council meetings this week. The purpose of such meetings is to consider passing ordinances allowing each city the right to declare a state of emergency and ensure that emergency protocols are in place, should the need arise. Such ordinances would give each city the authority to take necessary steps to protect the residents of the Illinois Valley area.**

**While there have been no documented cases of COVID-19 in the tri-county area of La Salle, Putnam and Bureau counties, the municipalities believe that preventive action should be taken so that emergency services, personnel, and municipal operations can react swiftly and effectively to address this quickly spreading pandemic.**

**City department heads have been instructed to create a response plan and dedicated emergency response teams would be formed in each municipality. A coordinated response effort has been discussed amongst the mayors, police and fire chiefs, and communication with the local hospitals and health departments will continue to be of utmost importance.**

**A declaration of emergency is a legal document that allows for the mobilization of city resources, activates each city's emergency action plan, streamlines staffing, and allows for future reimbursement from the state and federal governments.**

**All Special Meetings will be held at 6:30pm on Tuesday 03/17/2020.**